

# **ATLANTIC COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2006**

Atlantic County covers 567 square miles and is located on the outer coastal plain of New Jersey. The coastal plain dips gently from west to east, so that most of the hills and highest elevations occur in the western part of the County. The soil of Atlantic County is sandy, with low clay content. The sand along with the layers of clay forms a wedge a mile thick at the shore. Within this wedge are two aquifers: the Cohansey and Kirkwood formations. These contain great quantities of readily available groundwater. Water from the Cohansey provides the base flow for all the streams and rivers in the county. Atlantic County's northern border is the Mullica River with the Great Egg Harbor River and Tuckahoe Rivers forming the southern border. The eastern border is the Atlantic Ocean. The Western border is a manmade line separating Atlantic County from Camden and Gloucester counties.

Atlantic City has always been a major driving force in the overall development of Atlantic County. Historically, Atlantic City served as a seaside destination while today it is world renowned as a casino resort. While the casino industry has had a tremendous impact on the development of Atlantic County, regulatory legislation at the State level has also significantly affected County development trends in the past two decades.

With the exception of a part of Buena Borough, Atlantic County falls entirely into the regulated areas of the Pinelands Commission and the New Jersey Division of Coastal Resources (CAFRA). Areas along the Egg Harbor River, Patcong Creek and the Mullica River also fall under CAFRA. Both of these regulations influence development in Atlantic County. CAFRA attempts to steer growth to designated coastal Centers throughout the CAFRA area. Enactment of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management plan concentrates growth in Egg Harbor, Galloway, and Egg Harbor Townships.

Atlantic County has a population of 252,552 (2000 census). It is incorporated into 23 municipalities, ranging in size from Corbin City (468) to Atlantic City (40,517). Between 1990 and 2000 Atlantic County's Population grew by 28,225 persons or 13 per cent. Atlantic County's population is still growing; the increase is concentrated in those townships mentioned above.

Following National and Statewide trends, Atlantic County's racial composition also has become more diverse as we move into the future. Whites are expected to decline as a percentage of the total population between the year 2000 and 2010. By the year 2006, the New Jersey Department of Labor projects Atlantic County's Hispanic population to be 36,000 persons or 13.8 percent of the total projected population, an increase of nearly 20,000 people over the 1990's Census count.

This diversity in Atlantic County's geography and population is reflected in the diverse tasks of the environmental health services that are provided in the county. In the course of the day employees may be involved in ocean, bay or lake water sampling, potable water sampling at a migrant labor camp, responding to a hazardous materials release involving an underground storage tank, investigating an offsite odor and noise complaint allegedly originating from a solid waste facility, inspecting a septic system in various stages of construction, performing an indoor air quality survey at a school at the request of the superintendent and educating a gas station owner on the proper completion of an air quality permit application. The unifying factor is protecting the public's health from immediate danger, as well as working to ensure a safe and healthy environment for generations.

It must be understood that the separation of responsibilities under the strategic plan into six different goals is somewhat arbitrary. Many problems fall under more than one goal. For example: An investigation conducted as a result of a contaminated well actually involves strategic goals under Clean and Plentiful Water, Safe and Healthy communities, and Open and Effective government.

In general, Atlantic County's environmental health concerns are concentrated in the protection of groundwater. Since all most all-potable water used in Atlantic County ultimately comes from wells, not surface water or reservoirs, the ground water protection activities of the Division of Public Health are beneficial to all Atlantic County residents' not just well owners.

In addition, the environmental health of the County's beaches, coastal and inland wetlands needs to be maintained through education, surveying and enforcement. This is important not only from an environmental health perspective but also from a commercial and tourism vantage. It is therefore essential that funding sources be continued at optimum levels.

Environmental health issues to be addressed in 2006 are highlighted within each strategic goal category along with a plan to deal with the various challenges. Efforts in 2006 will be concentrated in the following: Bioterrorism as it relates to environmental health, continued implementation of the private well testing law which will include testing for the radium parameter and performing testing on rental properties, changing completely to the enterococcus parameter within the Coastal Cooperative Management Program (CCMP) and coordinating efforts with the County Office of Emergency Management in responding to manmade and natural disasters including hazardous material incident response.

Atlantic City Health Department (see Attachment III) highlights the City's specific needs along with a plan of action.

## **Strategic Environmental Goals**

### **Goal: Clean Air**

**The air throughout the Atlantic County will be healthful to breathe, and air pollutants will not damage our forests, land and water bodies.**

#### **Indicators:**

- Since 01/01/04, 168\* air pollution complaint investigations were conducted, 147 of those were indoor air quality (IAQ) investigations. Mold complaints accounted for 129 of the IAQ investigations during that period.
- There are 309 permitted minor & B source facilities currently registered
- NJDEP has air monitoring sites in Atlantic City and Nacote Creek (Galloway Township).
- There were 0 days in the year 2004 when ozone or carbon monoxide exceeded health limits.
- There were 3 days in year 2005 (up until October 23, 2005) that exceeded the 8-hour average health standard for ground-level ozone.

\* Number of complaints received from January 1 to September 30, 2005.

**Key Issues:**

Atlantic County is most concerned about two pollutants, ozone and fine particulate matter. Exposure to ozone can cause coughing, chest pain and throat irritation in healthy individuals and can trigger asthmatic reactions in sensitive individuals. Fine particulate pollution above current standards also causes increased asthma attacks and is linked to premature deaths of susceptible individuals.

There continues to be a concern among many Atlantic County residents' regarding the quality of indoor air. The Division continues to receive increasing numbers of complaints/inquiries regarding indoor air quality within homes, schools, office buildings, and municipal buildings. Poor indoor air quality has been attributed to a number of sources including the failure to maintain a HVAC system, water leaks that result in mold and mildew buildup, the off gassing of building materials and furnishings, the use of consumer and commercial products, and activities occurring within the building such as cooking, cleaning and smoking.

**Activities:**

- Investigate all air pollution complaints received from citizens and NJDEP. These investigations include, but are not limited to, open burning, odors, particulates, permits and certificates.
- Educate and offer technical assistance when requested, in regards to improving indoor air quality within schools and public buildings. Refer employees to PEOSHA as necessary.
- Educate and make referrals as needed to individuals in private residents that have concerns regarding their indoor air quality. Send residents information on IAQ testing and remediation firms.
- Maintain the inventory of delegated minor and other delegated source facilities.
- Enforce the State Air Pollution Control Code as required by the NJDEP. Notify the NJDEP Regional Field Office of all pending enforcement actions, including conferences. Enforcement actions will be in accordance with DEP's grace period policy.
- Compile and maintain files and records to support NJDEP and county enforcement actions.
- NJDEP will be notified five days prior to the convening of a settlement offer or taking court action. In addition, follow up reports on the out come of all settlement offers and court action will be forwarded to DEP.
- Information such as the document "What You Can Do" which describes steps that individuals can talk to improve air quality will be distributed at public gathering as such as fairs, festivals etc.
- During an investigating of an indoor air quality complaint at a school, the school's administration will be encouraged to adopt the "IAQ Tools for Schools" guide if they have not already done so.
- Information regarding PEOHSA consultative services will be distributed to administrators as needed.
- Conduct idling enforcement investigations to reduce diesel emissions.

**Resources:**

- Staff trained in odor enforcement and investigations of air pollution complaints.
- Lists of private contractors that perform indoor air quality evaluations and mold remediation will be updated when necessary and made available to the general public as needed.
- Equipment utilized during outdoor and indoor air quality evaluation will be maintained and calibrated in accordance with manufacturers recommendations.

**Needs:** A refresher training program on Subchapter 5 is needed for existing employees. Indoor air quality (IAQ) investigation training including training on vapor intrusion.

**Goal: Clean and Plentiful Water**

**Every person in Atlantic County will have safe drinking water either through a public water system or private wells. Atlantic County's rivers, lakes and coastal waters will be fishable, swimmable and support healthy ecosystems. Surface and ground water will be clean sources of water. Adequate quantities of surface and ground water will be available for all uses.**

**Indicators:****Safe Drinking Water:**

- Over five hundred private wells are tested each year by both the ACUA and private laboratories.
- In the year 2005 there are approximately 249 Public Non Community water systems operating in Atlantic County, and all required inspections will be completed before the end of the year.
- Preoccupancy migrant farm sampling was conducted on 102 wells, 30 of those wells were sampled midseason. Well water was tested for bacteria, nitrate and chlorine residual. Of the 30 midseason samples, 3 exceeded the bacteria standard and four exceeded the nitrate standard.
- There were 2 complaints received in 2005 involving potable water. Complaints received from DEP were investigated and the appropriate program manager was informed of action.

**Surface Water:**

- The Division collected over 400 ocean and bay recreational bathing water samples. All samples were tested for enterococcus.
- A recreational lake bathing site was closed to bathing for two days due to elevated bacteria levels
- The Division participated in the ambient sampling program with DEP. Surface water samples were collected at five different locations on five different days. Results at this time have not been received from DEP.
- There have been 10\* surface water complaints received this year. All were investigated and resolved.

\* Number of complaints from January 1 to September 30, 2005.

**Key Issue:**

Since the Private Well Testing Act provision to test Radium went into effect in September 2003 in Atlantic County, there have been over 120 private wells that tested over state limits for radium in the County. The number of wells contaminated with chemicals such as mercury, volatile organics, and nitrate is also always increasing. This has created a need for numerous community notifications as to the presence of these contaminants especially in Buena Vista, Galloway and Mullica Townships, and the Town of Hammonton. The Division has responded by notifying residents in affected areas by mail. These notices explain the type and nature of the contaminants found in their area and direct people to private labs for radium testing. They may test for other contaminants through the Division or have them performed through a private lab.

The Division is also using the information to advise municipalities to install public water lines where available. When an area has a significant number of confirmed cases of volatile organics and/or mercury, DEP assists in performing more comprehensive surveys of well water quality. The NJDEP can then authorize monies to be allocated for installation of public water lines.

Every newly discovered contaminated well generates dozens of calls to and from the affected homeowners, homebuyers, realtors, lawyers, municipal officials and concerned neighbors. With each new case, we experience a surge in requests for water testing. Each test requires a review of the lab analyses, and data must be electronically entered. A written report is prepared for the homeowner. Frequently, residents require technical consultation regarding risk, treatment systems, State Spill Fund application assistance.

A review of personnel needed to complete this work indicates that in the past year, the Division has committed additional professional staff and clerical support to the program.

Contaminated well water triggers many activities such as: groundwater investigations, informing and working with DEP and issuing public health advisories.

The resources that need to be appropriated toward the PWTA continue to climb. Especially with the addition of radium testing and the requirements for rental properties it is possible that *resources will need to be shifted from other CEHA programs and directed towards the continued implementation of the PWTA.*

Most of the miles of coastline in Atlantic County are used for recreational bathing. Starting in May and ending in September, the Division in partnership with Atlantic City Health Department tests the coastal waters weekly to assess conditions for bathers. Public bathing lakes are also tested. Results are reported to DEP immediately upon receipt, which is in electronic format in accordance with an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency. Atlantic City's results are included as well.

The Division, when appropriate, will assist the Atlantic County Department of Planning in the implementation of the watershed management plan for the Great Egg Harbor River. The Division will help identify key issues and problems specific to their watershed management area. The significant causes of water quality problems, including point sources of pollution, will be evaluated and the opportunities for improvement identified.

**Activities:**

- Continue to implement the private well testing act. Investigate all wells with exceedences that have a public health impact. Send notices to surrounding homeowners in areas where contamination is found.
- Conduct routine compliance inspections on non-transient and transient non-community public water supplies.
- Investigate all water pollution complaints from citizens and the DEP. These investigations will include, but are not limited to, potable, water contamination, and un-permitted discharges to surface water, improperly constructed wells and septic system malfunctions.
- Provide follow-up to MCL violations by and taking whatever measures needed to be protective of Public Health. Verify public notification.
- Require proper sealing of abandoned wells in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:9-9.
- Collect water samples as needed for analysis in accordance with the current versions of the NJDEP Field Sampling Procedures.
- Assist NJDEP in the collection of samples at freshwater ambient monitoring stations.
- Perform the recreational beach monitoring and pollution source investigations in support of the Cooperative Coastal Monitoring Program and perform the related activities required by Chapter 9 of the State Sanitary Code. Continue the partnership with USEPA (region 2) and NJDEP in the sharing of coastal recreational bathing data.
- Compile from all municipalities within the county the list of recreational bathing areas in lakes and creeks, the bacteria data collected as per Chapter 9 of the state sanitary code, and the number of beach closings required due to water quality impairments. Forward to NJDEP within the time specified.
- Initiate enforcement proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction against violator's as required by the NJDEP. Submit all reports documenting violations to NJDEP as required. Notify NJDEP regional field office of all pending enforcement actions. NJDEP shall be notified five days prior to convening a settlement conference or taking court action. Reports on the outcome of a settlement conference or court action will be forwarded to NJDEP.
- Conduct preoccupancy and midseason migrant farm sampling. Report violations to the Department of labor, notify farm owners, and post signs when necessary.

**Resources:**

- Contract with the Atlantic County Utility Authority for water lab services (see attachment I)
- Staff trained in the collection of potable and surface water samples, in the investigation of potable water and surface water complaints, and the inspection of non-community water supplies
- Geographic Information System (see attachment II)

**Needs:**

**The Division is requesting funding to support additional staff people to work within the private well testing program.**

**Goal: Safe and Healthy Communities**

**Every Atlantic County community will be free from unacceptable human health and ecological risks due to direct exposure from hazardous substances and other potentially harmful agents. Natural resources will be managed to protect the public from floods, fires and storms.**

**Indicators:****Contaminated sites:**

**Superfund Sites** – There are currently 8 sites in Atlantic County on the National Priorities List. One site was deleted on 5/7/98. Facility files are maintained and updated.

**Known Contaminated Sites** – The April 2001 NJDEP Known Contaminated Site List contained 518 sites in Atlantic County. The majority of these sites are underground storage tank cases. Facility files are maintained and updated.

**New Contaminated Sites** – Sites are reported to NJDEP hotline and are investigated by the Division of Public Health. Information is sent to appropriate NJDEP case manager. Property owners are encouraged to enter NJDEP Voluntary Cleanup Program.

**Hazardous Materials Incidents** – For the first three quarters of year 2005, the Division of Public Health responded to 94 hazardous material incidents/complaints. The majority of incidents dealt with the release of petroleum products from transportation accidents and fixed facility discharges. In addition, the Division has developed protocols with the County Office of Emergency Management involving responding to hazardous material incidents. Meetings are held quarterly to review calls received. Changes or amendments to the protocol document will be made as needed. There were also 107 reports of discharges from underground storage tanks in 2005 (first 3 quarters) and 158 reports in 2004.

**Solid Waste Facilities** – both the NJDEP and the Division of Public Health conduct Inspections. The Division of Public Health had performed 41 facility inspections in 2004.

**Landfills** – One (1) operating landfill.

**Transfer Stations** – One (1) public and one (1) private.

**Recycling Facilities (Class B)** – Five (5) are open to the public, five (5) private.

**Recycling Facilities (Class A)** – One (1) public facility.

**Compost Facilities** – There are six (6) compost facilities, five of which are exempt from full permitting (4 municipal, 1 private).

**Convenience Centers** – There are seven (8) municipal convenience centers.

**Solid Waste Complaints** – There have been 36 complaints investigated in the first three quarters of 2005. These complaints dealt primarily with illegal dumping, improper storage and illegal transportation of solid waste.

**Hauler Interviews**- 82 were conducted in 2004 and 121 conducted in first 3 quarters of 2005.

## Key Issues

Hazardous materials and solid waste management and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) present unique public health and environmental health challenges. Response to hazardous materials incidents reduces the potential for public exposure to chemicals. In addition, a timely response can reduce or eliminate contaminating soil, groundwater and surface water in Atlantic County.

The Atlantic County Office of Emergency Preparedness is the lead County agency for hazardous materials response. The ACOEP also coordinates the response of the Atlantic County Regional Hazardous Materials Team. The Division of Public Health is a support agency identified in the Hazardous Materials Annex of the County Emergency Operations Plan and is a part of the County Regional HazMat Team. We are a technical resource to local police and fire departments who normally first respond to a hazardous materials incident. Hazard assessments, air monitoring, decontamination, hazard control and cleanup oversight are a few of the functions provided to local responders. Communication and coordination with NJDEP Bureau of Emergency Response is also a critical mission.

Recent events which occurred after the September 11, 2001 World Trade Center tragedy challenged every sector of the emergency response community. Response to incidents involving suspect biological materials required timely coordination between local and County law enforcement along with County Emergency Management. Communication and coordination with State agencies was challenging. Emergency response plans for WMD need to be reviewed and updated as necessary. Coordination and lines of communication with hospitals and other agencies that may deal with a WMD event need to be strengthened. Issues such as mass decontamination resources need to be addressed. An advisory group entitled the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Task Force focuses on many issues dealing with WMD response and other public health emergencies both natural and manmade.

Natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods can present numerous hazardous materials problems. After a storm in August of 1997, methane from an unknown source entered the basements of a number of residences. Contents of fuel oil tanks can escape after flooding. Unsecured containers of hazardous materials can also be dislodged and cause serious danger to the public.

Staffing, after hour response time, training and funding continue to be challenges faced in all aspects of emergency response. Weapons of mass destruction, which includes chemical, biological and radiological hazards, will require a tremendous amount of training, funding and coordination with local, state and federal agencies.

Public education on chemical hazards and locations of contaminated sites is an on going task. Chemical hazard information is disseminated at local community events that include promoting household hazardous waste collection days sponsored by the Atlantic County Utilities Authority. Recent incidents involving chemical reactions in solid waste collection vehicles remind us about hazardous materials routinely discarded by homeowners.

Atlantic County has many undeveloped and protected environmentally sensitive areas. The public through dirt roads can access many of these areas. Unfortunately individuals have targeted some of these areas for illegal dumping of solid waste and in some cases hazardous materials. High tipping fees at solid waste facilities in addition to convenient access have contributed to the problem. Enforcement at the local level is limited to a handful of towns leaving the Division of Public Health as the lead agency to investigate these incidents.

Implementation of many aspects of the County Solid Waste Management plan, including recycling, is delegated to the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA). The ACUA operates a landfill, transfer station, recycling center and compost facility. They provide curbside collection of recyclables for residents in addition to collecting recyclables from certain businesses. All municipalities have identified recycling coordinators and have local ordinances that provide a mechanism for recycling enforcement. Atlantic County and many municipalities use Clean Community grant money for roadside litter removal. Materials such as tires and asbestos still present challenges.

Illegally disposed or stockpiled tires pose fire hazards and mosquito breeding habitat. In 2001, Atlantic County was awarded \$130,337.75 as part of the Scrap Tire Management Fund administered by the NJDEP. A tire amnesty program for residents collected 50.9 tons of tires. Municipalities and the Atlantic County Mosquito Control Unit removed 75.56 tons of tires from the environment as part of the spending plan. In early 2002, a contractor removed 727 tons of tires abandoned at a site in Mullica Township. A portion of the grant was also used to produce an educational video on West Nile Virus. Additional funds were applied for in 2002. Atlantic County was awarded \$250,000 to complete the cleanup of the Perona abandoned tire site in Mullica Township. In 2003 cleanup was completed. The Tire Management and Cleanup Fund was established in 2004. Counties and municipalities can apply for funding to cleanup abandoned tire piles. We are working with Mullica Township on an application to start the cleanup of the last major tire pile in Atlantic County. Work on this site should commence by end of 2005.

Regulations regarding the proper removal, packaging, transportation and disposal of asbestos are confusing to the general public. Asbestos is at least partially regulated by two federal agencies, four state agencies and the local building inspector.

Consistency and timing of inspections at solid waste facilities remain an issue between the NJDEP and the Division of Public Health. Performing joint inspections with NJDEP should help. Guidance documents from NJDEP regarding handling of certain materials such as asphalt millings, street sweeping material and asbestos are useful but are not sent directly to the Counties or other affected agencies in a timely manner. Regional Solid Waste Forums coordinated by the NJDEP are used to distribute timely information and discuss important enforcement issues that affect the Counties. We find these meetings very useful and should be continued.

#### **Activities:**

##### **Hazardous Materials**

- Respond to all hazardous material emergencies referred by NJDEP to assess environmental threats and advise Bureau of Emergency Response accordingly. Assist in emergency response actions, if applicable, in accordance with the approved CEHA work program and the County Hazardous Materials Annex. Make recommendations to and coordinate these response actions with appropriate federal, State and local agencies. Submit reports to NJDEP for all incidents responded to, documenting the type of incident, the remedial action taken and whether or not a violation occurred. In the event of a violation, submit reports documenting the violation(s) to NJDEP for enforcement actions, as required by the NJDEP.
- Investigate all hazardous materials complaints received from citizens and NJDEP as required by NJDEP. These investigations include potential and known discharges of hazardous materials to the environment. Refer cases requiring remedial action to NJDEP. Submit violations of the Spill Act and RCRA to NJDEP for enforcement actions.

- Maintain a core of trained and equipped personnel that are capable of responding to hazardous materials incidents. Coordinate activities with NJDEP, local fire departments, hazmat units and the County's Office of Emergency Management as appropriate. See Attachment IV Atlantic County's Hazardous Materials Annex.
- Maintain an adequate supply of hazmat disposable equipment, such as pads, sweeps, etc. and equipment such as radios, air monitoring devices, etc.
- Ensure that personnel assigned to hazmat incidents are properly trained and participating in a medical surveillance program.
- Compile and maintain files and records to support NJDEP enforcement actions.
- Maintain GIS coverage for contaminated sites.

## **Solid Waste**

- Monitor transporters hauling solid waste to ensure compliance with NJDEP regulations and at the discretion of the local agency, the County's Solid Waste Management Plan.
- Investigate all solid waste complaints received from citizens and NJDEP, such as illegal dumping of solid waste materials, unregistered haulers and unpermitted facilities. Respond back to NJDEP within ten (10) days of receipt with the initial or final outcome of complaint as the case may warrant.
- Continue to update the list of all known convenience centers, farmland mulch sites and Class A recycling centers and provide this list to NJDEP, OLEM by December 31, 2005.
- Conduct inspections as needed to ensure contaminated soil is handled as per NJDEP guidelines.
- Conduct interviews of solid waste transporters to verify exempt status. Currently 75-125 interviews are conducted each year.
- Conduct routine monitoring inspections of delegated solid waste facilities, including operating landfills, transfer stations and recycling facilities.
- Enforce the Solid Waste Management Act as required by NJDEP, initiate enforcement proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction against violators as appropriate. NJDEP shall be notified five (5) days prior to the convening of all settlement conferences and / or court actions. The notification shall include the proposed settlement amount or the penalty amount to be sought in the court action. In addition, follow-up reports on the outcome of all settlement conferences and court actions, including the penalty assessment and compliance plan (if applicable), shall be forwarded to NJDEP's Solid Waste Compliance and Enforcement Program.
- In a format approved by NJDEP, provide a monthly report to NJDEP Solid Waste Compliance and Enforcement indicating NOV's issued, name of violator, location of violation, nature of violation (citation), and penalty assessed (via e-mail or hard copy).
- Compile and maintain files and records to support NJDEP and County enforcement actions.

## Resources

- Staff trained to respond to hazardous materials incidents
- Hazmat response vehicles assigned to designate personnel with cell phone and radios.
- Personal protective equipment assigned to response personnel. Self-contained breathing apparatus, air purifying respirators, chemical suits, gloves, boots, hardhats, etc.
- Air monitoring equipment. Foxboro TVA 1000 (organics), MultiRae Plus Multi Gas Monitor PGM-50 (four gas plus PID), MiniRae PID, Dräger CMS System with various chemical chips, Dräger Detector Tubes, TSI Q-Trak 8551 (CO & CO<sub>2</sub>).
- Disposable oil absorbent booms and pads, plastic sheeting.
- Hand tools – augers, shovel, wrenches, etc.
- Sampling equipment and containers.
- Laptop computer with portable printer.
- Geographic Information System (see attachment II).
- Reference chemical books and access to Internet.

## Needs

- Annual training in HazMat and WMD. Physicals and respirator fit testing.
- Perform joint inspections with NJDEP at solid waste facilities.
- Air monitoring equipment maintenance and calibration.
- Staff training for GIS and other related computer programs.
- Funding towards personnel in hazardous materials incidence response.

**Noise:**

- Respond to all noise complaints received from citizens and NJDEP, and investigate all complaints that are under the jurisdiction of the State Noise Code.
- Compile and maintain files and records to support NJDEP and the Division's enforcement actions
- Maintain certification of at least one individual on staff in the performance of noise control investigations.
- Initial enforcement proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction against violators as required by the State Noise Code.

**Noise Complaints** – Four complaints has been received since January 1, 2004

**Resources:**

**Personnel:** Three staff members currently certified to take noise readings.

**Noise Equipment:**

- Quest 214 Sound Level Meter Type 2      serial # K 5060017
- Quest 215 Sound Level Meter Type 2      serial # M 906039
- Quest Octave Ban Filter OB-45      serial # N 9060006
- Quest Sound Calibrator Model CA-12      serial # U 906030
- Quest Sound Calibrator Model CA-12B      serial # U 5070080
- Kestrel 2000 Wind Meter with temperatures

**Needs**

- Funding requested to replace two noise meters purchased in 1980's.

## **Goal: Open and Effective Government**

**Atlantic County will fulfill its vision and mission and achieve its goals through the involvement of citizens and stakeholders as critical partners and through a commitment to quality principles and methods as a means to continuous improvement of its operations.**

### **Indicators:**

During the year 2004 meetings/discussions were held within various municipalities to discuss issues with residents and/or town officials on subject matter that consisted of the following: private well water contamination, solid waste facility issues, West Nile Virus, noise regulations, surface water standards and bioterrorism.

News releases are issued when requested and /or when necessary to keep the public informed. If the environmental health issues impacts on a certain area of the county, those municipal officials are kept informed on a continuous basis. Their questions and input is also encouraged, as they are in the best position to explain what the concerns of community will likely be.

The Atlantic County web page was updated to describe environmental health services provided by the Division

A radio show specific to public health that debuted in 2000 continues to be aired. The half hour show has highlighted environmental health issues such as solid and hazardous waste, well water testing, The private well testing act, the coastal cooperative monitoring program, West Nile virus, and issues related to bioterrorism. Listeners were encouraged to call the Division or visit the Web page.

Every month, municipal clerks received a print out of complaint investigations conducted within their town that month. The status of each complaint and an updated status of all other complaint investigations performed from the beginning of the year are also contained within the report.

In the year 2004 the Division received 286 record requests. Record requests were received from attorneys, citizens and from other government entities (municipalities, Green Acres, etc.) Many individuals reviewed files at the Division of Public Health. The Division became familiar with and complies with the Open Public Records Act.

Key environmental health staff represents the Division on the Atlantic County Park and Environment Advisory Board and the Emergency Management Advisory Board. The task forces and boards are made up of citizens, municipal, county, and state officials in addition to representatives from various organizations. Environmental health issues of concern are discussed at the meetings. In addition, the Division is represented at the municipal emergency management meetings held monthly at the office of county emergency management.

### **Key Issues:**

The September 11 tragedy and subsequent bioterrorism threats highlighted more than ever how important it is for the County to communicate with local municipalities. Information such as public health alerts/advisories as they related to the local community's law enforcement, emergency management coordinator, fire department, first responders, school system, hospitals etc. are distributed to local officials when necessary. Also each town was notified when mosquito spraying was scheduled. Many local officials actually placed this information on their local cable channel. The spraying schedule can also be

found on the county's web site and a West Nile Virus hotline was activated in 2002 providing information on the virus and any mosquito spraying that would be taking place. During the year 2004, the county continued to expand and improve its communication in this area.

Atlantic City Health Department is the Division's CEHA subcontractor that provides full environmental health services within the City. Given the City's tourist/casino industry, along with its sensitive coastal and back bay areas, the Atlantic City Health Department has submitted its own Environmental Health Assessment and Improvement Plan in regards to issues that are specific to the city (See attachment III).

During the summer months the County and the City partner closely to perform activities within the Coastal Cooperative Monitoring program. The City and County offer assistance to each other when necessary within this program and within all others upon request. The City and the County are each represented on the Public Health Emergency Task Force.

More communication between certain DEP program managers and the Division's would be helpful.

**Activities:**

- A Public Health Emergency Task Force has been formed to ensure that Atlantic County is properly prepared to handle a major public health emergency, both natural and man made, and that the local public health departments and health care community have the resources and knowledge necessary to quickly identify and coordinate an appropriate medical response to an infectious disease outbreak.
- Town meetings will be continued and encouraged. Municipal officials will be updated on environmental issues impacting their community as needed or upon their request.
- The Atlantic County web page is updated on an ongoing basis.
- Information and/or assistance will be provided on all record requests received.
- Hazmat staff will continue to train with the County Regional Team.
- Atlantic City will submit an Environmental Health Assessment and Improvement plan.
- Municipal clerks will receive monthly reports on investigations.
- There will be environmental health representation on advisory boards and at municipal emergency meetings.
- Timely communication with the news media will continue.

**Resources:**

Environmental Health Staff  
Records room and copy machine

**Needs:** See Attachment II Geographic Information Systems

## References:

- DEP Strategic Plan
- National Environmental Performance Partnership System (NEPPS)
- DEP's Water Quality Monitoring Networks Report
- Atlantic County CEHA Work plan
- Atlantic County Master Plan
- Atlantic County Water Quality Management Plan
- Atlantic County Solid Waste Management Plan
- Healthy People 2010: Environmental Health
- The document "Meeting Atlantic County Needs" Format prepared by the NJ Center for Environmental Indicators
- 1998 Environmental Monitoring for Public Access and Community Tracking Findings (EMPACT)
- Findings and Recommendations for the Remediation of Historic Pesticide Contamination
- Comprehensive Service Plan Environmental Impact Statement for the Great Egg Harbor National, Scenic and Recreational River
- Atlantic County 2005 Report on the Environment
- Atlantic County Community Health Needs Assessment "Partnership for a Healthy Community"
- Atlantic County Community Health Profile
- Atlantic County Human Services Advisory "Prioritization of Unmet Service Needs: Environmental Health"
- DEP's April 2001 Known Contaminated Site List